

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A portable memory device for a USB-supporting data processing system, the memory device comprising:
 - a USB connector for being connected to a USB port of the data processing system;
 - an integrated circuit memory for writing/reading data;
 - a connector cover protecting the USB connector from damage, the connector cover capable of sliding and automatically backwards upon insertion of the portable memory device into said ~~the~~ USB port exposing the USB connector; and
 - a USB interface coupled between the USB connector and the memory, for interfacing the memory with the data processing system.
2. (Original) The memory device of claim 1, wherein the memory is a nonvolatile semiconductor memory.
3. (Canceled)
4. (Currently Amended) The memory device of claim 1, wherein the memory device is ~~worked~~ operated as a portable memory device of the data processing system.
5. (Original) The memory device of claim 1, wherein the memory device supports a plug and play function, and the USB connector is capable of being connected and separated to/from the USB port of the data processing system while the data processing system is powered on.

6. (Original) The memory device of claim 1, wherein the memory device stores a security information.

7. (Original) The memory device of claim 6, wherein the data processing system stores a security information to verify an authorized user.

8. (Currently Amended) The memory device of claim 7, wherein the data processing system ~~starts to work~~ operates only when the security information of the memory device is matched with the security information of the data processing system.

Claims 9 - 15 (Canceled)

Claims 16 – 21 (Canceled)

22. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 1, further comprising:
a spring coupled between ~~said the~~ connector cover and a housing of the device.

23. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 22, ~~said wherein the~~ spring being is compressed upon attachment of ~~said the~~ portable memory device to ~~said the~~ USB port.

24. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 22, ~~said wherein the~~ cover having has a ridge protruding from a side portion of ~~said the~~ cover that engages a concave groove in ~~said the~~ housing enabling ~~said the~~ cover to slide forwards and backwards with respect to ~~said the~~ housing.

25. (Currently Amended) A method of securing a host computer, comprising the steps-of:

applying power to the host computer;
determining whether a USB security device is attached to a USB port on the host;
displaying an error message when it is determined that the USB security device is not

attached to the USB port of the host;

reading a password from the USB security device and comparing the read password with a password stored in the host;

displaying an error message when the password on the USB security device does not match the password stored in the host and preventing the host from being booted when the password on the USB security device does not match the password stored in the host;

booting up the host computer only when the USB security device is attached to the USB port of the host and only when the password stored in the USB security device matches the password stored in the host computer; and

attaching the USB security device to the USB port of the host computer prior to when power is applied to the host, ~~said the attaching step~~ operation comprising automatically sliding a cover on ~~said the~~ USB security device backward in a direction opposite to a direction of inserting the USB security device into the USB port when the USB security device is attached to the USB port of the host computer.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, further comprising: ~~the step of~~ enabling a hard disk drive in the host only when the USB security device is attached to the USB port of the host and only when the password stored in the USB security device matches the password stored in the host computer.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, ~~said wherein the~~ booting up ~~of the host computer comprises: step comprising~~ loading an operating system in the host.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, ~~said wherein the~~ reading and comparing ~~step being is~~ performed prior to when the host computer is booted up.

Claims 29-30 (Canceled)

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, ~~wherein~~ further comprising:

providing the USB security device with: ~~comprises:~~

a USB connector for being connected to the USB port of the host computer, the cover being biased to cover the USB connector prior to insertion into the USB port;

an integrated circuit memory for writing/reading data;

~~a connector cover protecting the USB connector from damage; the connector cover capable of sliding automatically backwards upon insertion of the portable memory device into said USB port exposing the USB connector; and~~

a USB interface coupled between the USB connector and the memory, for interfacing the memory with the data processing system.

32. (Currently Amended) The portable memory device of claim 1, the portable memory device being used to securing a host computer according to a process comprising the steps of:

applying power to the host computer;

determining whether a portable memory device is attached to a USB port on the host;

displaying an error message when it is determined that the portable memory device is not attached to the USB port of the host;

reading a password from the portable memory device and comparing the read password with a password stored in the host;

displaying an error message when the password on the portable memory device does not match the password stored in the host and preventing the host from being booted when the password on the portable memory device does not match the password stored in the host; and

booting up the host computer only when the portable memory device is attached to the USB port of the host and only when the password stored in the portable memory device matches the password stored in the host computer.

33. (Previously Presented) A portable memory device for a USB-supporting data processing system, the memory device comprising:

a USB connector to be connected to a USB port of the data processing system;

an integrated circuit memory to write/read data;

a USB interface coupled between the USB connector and the memory, to interface the memory with the data processing system; and

an automatically retractable cover having a rectangular cross-section to protect the USB connector from damage when the portable memory device is not connected to the USB-supporting data processing system,

wherein the portable memory device comprises a hole to accommodate a key ring.

34. (Previously Presented) The portable memory device of claim **33**, further comprising a flat ledge,

wherein the retractable cover is a sliding retractable cover,

wherein the retractable sliding cover when retracted exposes the USB connector and when not retracted covers the USB connector, and

wherein the retractable sliding cover when retracted slides onto the flat ledge to accommodate the retractable sliding cover while permitting exposure of the USB connector sufficient to be connected to the USB port.

35. (Previously Presented) The portable memory device of claim **33**, further comprising a housing to accommodate the memory and the USB interface.

36. (Previously Presented) The portable memory device of claim **34**, further comprising a housing to accommodate the memory and the USB interface.

37. (Currently Amended) The portable memory device of claim **36**, wherein the flat ledge has an overall thickness less than an overall thickness of the housing and the flat ledge is attached to the USB connector at an end and to the housing ~~at~~ of the USB interface at another end.

38. (Previously Presented) The portable memory device of claim **37**, wherein the cover has an overall interior opening of a thickness greater than the overall thickness of the flat ledge.

39. (Previously Presented) The portable memory device of claim **38**, wherein the flat ledge further comprises a spring or a groove and the cover, the housing, the USB connector and the flat ledge have a rectangular cross-sectional shape.

40. (Previously Presented) The portable memory device of claim **39**, wherein the hole has an oval shape.

41. (Currently Amended) The portable memory device of claim **38**, wherein the thickness of the retractable cover equals the overall thickness of the housing minus the overall thickness of the ~~flat ledge~~ USB connector.

42. (Currently Amended) The portable memory device of claim **41**, wherein an overall outer ~~thickness~~ dimension of the retractable cover equals the overall thickness of the housing.

43. (New) A portable security device for a USB-supporting data processing system, the memory device comprising:

a housing;

a USB connector disposed at a first end of the housing and coupled to the USB connector to insert into a USB port of the data processing system;

an integrated circuit memory enclosed within the housing to store therein a computer readable code;

a connector cover biased against the housing in a first position around a distal end of the USB connector and retracted into a second position by engaging with a periphery of the USB port responsive to the insertion of the USB connector; and

a USB interface enclosed within the housing and electrically interposed between the USB connector and the memory to provide the computer readable code to the data processing system, the absence of which preventing an operating system of the data processing system from booting.

44. (New) A method of securing a host computer, the method comprising:

- applying power to the host computer;
- determining whether a USB security device is attached to a USB port on the host computer prior to loading an operating system;
- preventing the operating system from loading and displaying an error message when it is determined that the USB security device is not attached to the USB port of the host computer;
- reading a computer-readable code from the USB security device and comparing the code with a code stored in the host computer;
- preventing the operating system from loading and displaying an error message when the code on the USB security device does not match the code stored in the host computer;
- loading the operating system only when the USB security device is attached to the USB port of the host computer and only when the code stored in the USB security device matches the code stored in the host computer; and
- attaching the USB security device to the USB port of the host computer prior to the power being applied thereto, the attaching including inserting the USB security device into the USB port and thereby retracting a cover surrounding a connector on the USB security device by engaging with a periphery of the USB port responsive to the insertion of the USB security device.